

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A connecting system, comprising:

an elongated element including a connecting member, the connecting member having an engaging portion; and

a receiving element including an opening, the opening being shaped to allow sliding passage of the elongated element such that, with respect to a central axis of the elongated element, a shape of the engaging portion is aligned with a shape of the opening in a first angular position, whereby the connecting member passes through the opening, and in a second angular position different from the first angular position, interference exists between a surface of the engaging portion and a surface of the receiving element thereby preventing the connecting member from passing through the opening,

wherein the engaging portion of the connecting member includes at least a pair of opposed indentations and/or protrusions, and

wherein the at least a pair of opposed indentations and/or protrusions are arranged in staggered relationship around the elongated element at alternating angular positions.

Claims 2 and 3 (Canceled)

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The connecting system according to claim 1, wherein the engaging portion of the connecting member includes two or more pairs of indentations and/or protrusions formed in spaced-apart relationship on the elongated element.

Claim 5 (Canceled)

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The connecting system according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein the ~~one of an indentation and protrusion is~~ indentations and/or protrusions are formed by upsetting or flattening.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The connecting system according to claim 1, wherein the receiving element includes clamping means for clamping onto the elongated element.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The connecting system according to claim 7, wherein the clamping means are configured to clamp around the connecting member.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The connecting system according to claim 7 or 8, wherein the clamping means is configured for clamping down on indentations.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The connecting system according to claim 7, wherein the clamping means is springing ears.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The connecting system according to claim 7, wherein the clamping means includes notches, such that the elongated element is adjacent to the notches after passing through the opening.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The connecting system according to claim 1, wherein the connecting member is proximate to an end of the elongated element.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A method for connecting and disconnecting elements of a connecting system, comprising:

aligning an elongated element and a receiving element at an angle relative to each other, such that in a first angular position, a shape of an engaging portion of a connecting member aligns with a shape of an opening of the receiving element, and in a second angular position different from the first angular position, the shape of the engaging portion interferes with the shape of the opening; [[and]]

performing one of pushing the elements together or pulling the elements apart while in the first angular position such that the engaging portion passes through the opening;

repeating the aligning such that a subsequent engaging portion of the connecting member aligns with the opening, wherein the subsequent engaging portion is substantially similar in shape as the engaging portion and at least one subsequent engaging portion nearest to the engaging portion is disposed at an angle different from a position of the engaging portion; and

repeating the performing one of pushing the elements together or pulling the elements apart, such that the subsequent engaging portion passes through the opening.

Claim 14 (Canceled)

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An earring, comprising:

[[a]] the connecting system according to claim 1,

wherein the elongated element is a shank element and the receiving element is a sliding element, which allows sliding passage of the shank element with the connecting member in an angular position.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A suspension system for objects, comprising:
[[using]] the connecting system according to claim 1, ~~in which~~
wherein the objects are suspended from a ceiling.

Claims 17-18 (Canceled)

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The connecting system according to claim 1,
wherein the receiving element is substantially ring-shaped.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The connecting system according to claim 1,
wherein the shape of the engaging portion and the shape of the opening is substantially
ovular.